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Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 08704 221131Z

45
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-20 DRC-01

NIC-01 IO-14 ACDA-19 /132 W
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R 221106Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 235

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, AU
SUBJECT: PROVINCIAL ELECTION RESULTS

REF: VIENNA 8680

1. SUMMARY: PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS HELD OCTOBER 21 BROUGHT UNEXPECTED GAINS FOR SOCIALISTS (SPOE) IN VIENNA AND UNANTICIPATED VICTORY FOR PEOPLE'S PARTY (OEVP) IN UPPER AUSTRIA. END SUMMARY

2. VIENNA SOCIALISTS WHO HAD FEARED LOSS OF TWO OR THREE SEATS IN WAKE OF CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING EX-MAYOR SLAVIK WERE TAKEN BY SURPRISE WHEN THEY WON THREE MORE SEATS FOR A TOTAL OF 66 OUT OF 100 REPRESENTING LARGEST MAJORITY EVER ACHIEVED IN VIENNA. PEOPLE'S PARTY GAINED ONE SEAT FOR TOTAL OF 31 THUS FALLING THREE SHORT OF REQUIRED NUMBER TO OBTAIN VICE MAYORALTY. FREEDOM PARTY (FPOE) LOST ONE OF ITS FOUR SEATS. AS ANTICIPATED IN REFTEL, NEITHER COMMUNISTS NOR EUROPEAN FEDERALISTS GAINED REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS PARTY (DFP) LOST ITS THREE SEATS WHICH PROBABLY WENT TO SOCIALISTS.

3. IN UPPER AUSTRIA, OEVP FEARS OF LOSSES DID NOT MATERIALIZE. NOT ONLY COULD THEY HOLD THEIR POSITION
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 08704 221131Z

BUT GAINED TWO SEATS AT EXPENSE OF SPOE. FREEDOM PARTY

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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RETAINED THEIR PREVIOUS STRENGTH. WITH NEW DISTRIBUTION OF OEVP-28; SPOE-24; FPOE-4, PEOPLE'S PARTY HAS CLEAR MAJORITY HENCE NOT REQUIRING SUPPORT OF FPOE FOR ELECTION OF GOVERNOR OR FILLING PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. COMMUNISTS FAILED TO GAIN REPRESENTATION.

4. ELECTION OUTCOME WILL CHANGE REPRESENTATION IN RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT UPPER HOUSE (BUNDESRAT) FROM SPOE-30; OEVP-28 TO 29 MEMBERS FOR EACH PARTY.

5. COMMENT: WE TEND TO AGREE WITH IMMEDIATE POST ELECTION COMMENTS MADE BY CHANCELLOR KREISKY AND OEVP CHAIRMAN SCHLEINZER THAT ELECTION OUTCOME STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY ATTRACTIVE PERSONALITIES OF TWO WINNING CANDIDATES. COMPETENT UPPER AUSTRAIN GOVERNOR WENZL WAS OPPOSED BY FRIDL WHO WAS LAST MINUTE CHOICE BY SPOE AFTER HAVING BEEN PITTED AGAINST BETTER QUALIFIED HILLINGER. SIMILARLY, SPOE'S SHREWD TACTIC OF REPLACING VIENNA MAYOR SLAVIK WITH GRATZ GAVE SOCIALISTS UPPER HAND OVER OEVP'S HAHN WHO WAS LITTLE KNOWN AS NATIONAL MP AND UNTESTED ON PROVINCIAL/CITY LEVEL.
HUMES

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